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ABSTRACT

This booklet depicts the thinking of state-level and local-level advocates and policymakers regarding the complementary nature of service learning and school-to-work and explains the benefits of linking the two strategies through partnerships. The similarities and differences between service learning and school-to-work are presented along with benefits of service learning and school-to-work alone and together. The implications of these similarities, differences, and benefits for policy, partnerships, and practice are discussed as well as policies facilitating linkage of service learning and school-to-work. The following broad rationales for linking service learning and school-to-work are identified: (1) both learning opportunities expose students to a wide variety of careers and illustrate how school-based learning relates to the skills and abilities required in the workplace; (2) both strategies provide opportunities for students to engage in multidisciplinary, project-based learning; and (3) because both strategies facilitate development of similar skills, their resources can be leveraged and combined to support a comprehensive initiative. A total of six project profiles--two illustrating how each of the three rationales are manifested at the state and local levels--are presented. Each profile includes a rationale; descriptions of key policies, partnerships, and practices; and a contact address. The bibliography lists 20 references. (MN)

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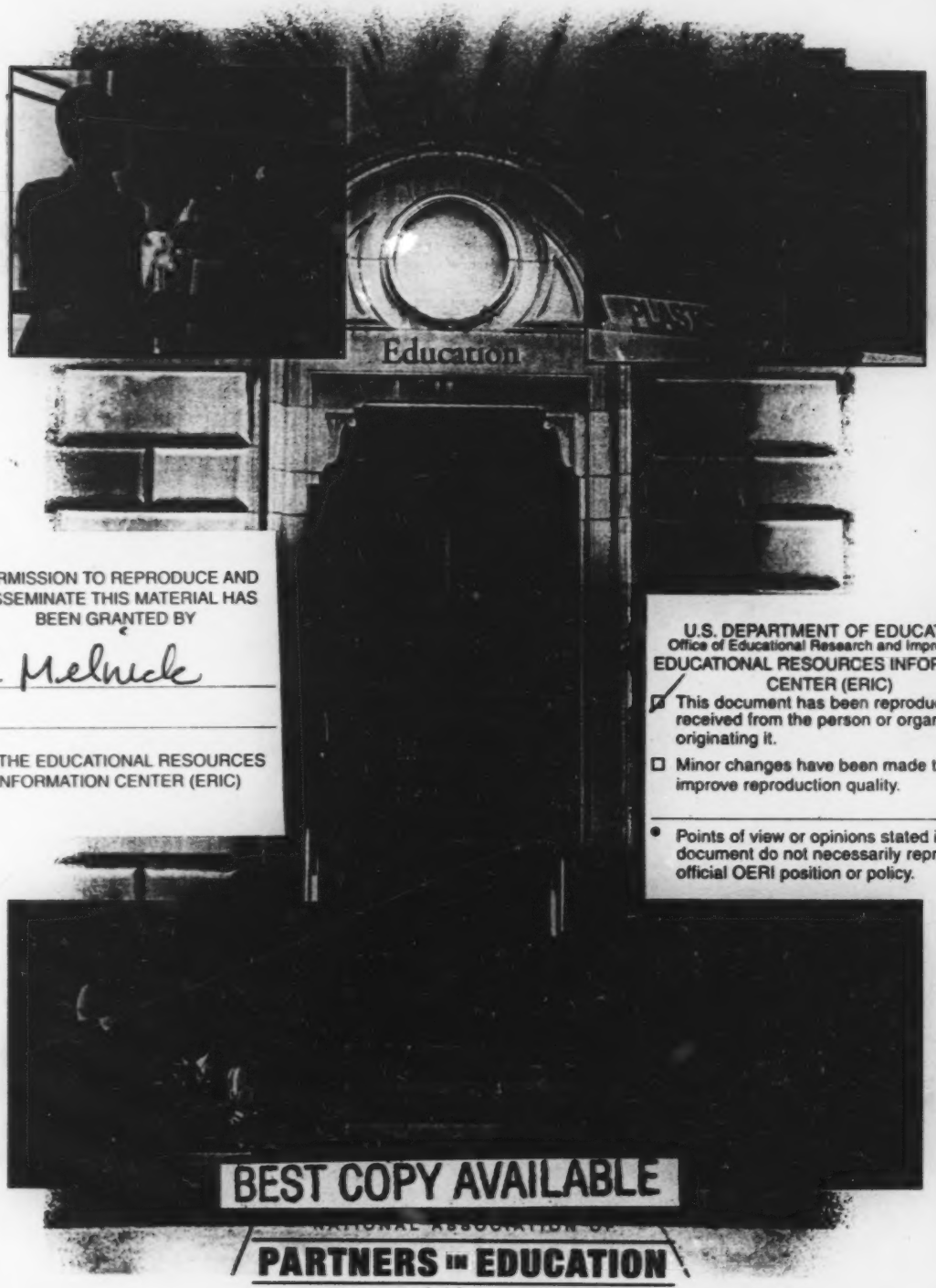
Linking Service-Learning and School-to-Work:

Policy, Partnerships and Practice to Help All Students Succeed



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PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

Keeping Children at the Center

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Ultimately, the goal of a partnership that supports a school-to-work and service-learning initiative is to build integrated systems that combine the economic and organizational focus of school-to-work with the passion and moral purpose of service-learning to improve learning for all students.

This Publication was made possible through a generous grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation

Preface

The National Association of PARTNERS IN EDUCATION is devoted to the mission of providing leadership in the formation and growth of effective partnerships that ensure success for all students. Through our materials, training, consulting and network of partnership professionals, PARTNERS IN EDUCATION involves the entire community to develop and sustain partnerships to achieve student success.

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION believes that having service-learning and school-to-work experiences will positively affect a student's academic achievement, personal growth and will strengthen the communities in which they live. The foundation and sustainability of service-learning and school-to-work is in the strength of the partnership(s) that support it. Engaging stakeholders in all aspects of an initiative that combines service-learning and school-to-work will ensure that community needs are met while students reinforce and apply what they learn in the classroom and practice real life skills. Ultimately, the goal of a partnership that supports a school-to-work and service-learning initiative is to build integrated systems that combine the economic and organizational focus of school-to-work with the passion and moral purpose of service-learning to improve learning for all students.

This publication is the final activity in a multi-year grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to study the intersection of service-learning and school-to-work. In previous work, PARTNERS IN EDUCATION has studied these strategies by conversing with individuals and organizations at the national level. The purpose of this publication is to depict the thinking of advocates and policymakers at the state and local levels on the complementary nature of service-learning and school-to-work. We describe how partnership supports practices that encourage these two strategies working together to enhance student success. It is through this lens that this study has been conducted and this document compiled.

The research was conducted by phone and written interviews with individuals who are actively engaged in initiatives that incorporate service-learning and school-to-work. The authors were fortunate to benefit from the work of Learning In Deed, a multi-year project to encourage more school systems across the country to make quality service-learning opportunities available in every K-12 classroom. Special thanks to Chris Kwak, Bob Bhaerman, Sarah Pearson, Chris Rury, Mike Brugh, Marge Crichton, Beth Packard and Terry Zimmerman.

Introduction

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION has been a leader in service-learning and school-to-work partnerships for many years. Since 1993, PARTNERS IN EDUCATION has been helping schools and school districts organize and manage school-based partnerships that support service-learning. Through grants from the Corporation for National Service, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and other organizations, PARTNERS IN EDUCATION has trained service-learning coordinators from all across the country to develop and implement partnerships to sustain effective service-learning initiatives. PARTNERS IN EDUCATION has also worked with individuals throughout the country to organize and manage partnerships to support school-to-work systems that benefit the community.

In 1996, PARTNERS IN EDUCATION began to explore the ways that service-learning and school-to-work serve as complementary school reform initiatives. Thirty-nine leaders representing the national education, business, nonprofit, foundation and government perspectives gathered at the Wingspread House to discuss learning academic content through collaborative service-learning and school-to-work activities. The conclusion drawn from this meeting was that the intersection of service-learning and school-to-work presents opportunities based on partnerships, with each partner contributing a different area of expertise and strength to provide students with real-life, hands on experiences that deepen their understanding of academic and practical concepts. *Service-Learning and School-to-Work: A Partnership Strategy for Educational Renewal,* which summarized the outcomes and recommendations of the meeting, has been disseminated to over 11,000 individuals.

As a result of the Wingspread summit's success, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation asked PARTNERS IN EDUCATION to host a similar conference with local leaders in Kansas City, Missouri. Over 150 students, educators, business people, and representatives from foundations, government and community-based organizations attended the conference. *Service-Learning and School-to-Career: Expanding the Definition of Education* documented this meeting, the conclusion of which was that service-learning and school-to-work are not programs but rather processes that must involve partnerships with a multitude of community-based stakeholders. Service-learning and school-to-work are appropriate for all students and both introduce students to the concept of life-long learning.

In 2001, we build on this work by looking at other examples at the local level of linking service-learning and school-to-work. We have found a great deal of

examples of policies and practice that demonstrate the impact of the coordination of these strategies. This framework of policy, practice and, of course, *partnership*, guide the thinking and format of this publication. We hope it will be helpful to policymakers, community stakeholders and practitioners in developing effective strategies to coordinate service-learning and school-to-work.

> ...service-learning and school-to-work are not programs but rather processes that must involve partnerships with a multitude of community-based stakeholders...

Linking Service-Learning and School-to-Work

Much has been written on the similarities and differences between service-learning and school-to-work, the benefits of each individual strategy and the benefits of linking the two. The following synopsis was developed based on a review of literature (Bhaerman, 1995; Furco, 1995; Brown, 1995; Gomez, 1997; Immel & Keister, 1997):

Similarities Between Service-Learning and School-to-Work

- Both are based on the constructivist theory of learning which views students as active learners and producers of knowledge.
- Both have logistical challenges such as transportation, liability, integration of in-school and out-of-school experiences that can be overcome through the development of appropriate policy.
- Both have had to overcome the perception of being non-academic: school-to-work as a track for non-college bound students and service-learning as an altruistic extra-curricular activity.
- Both require extensive involvement from a variety of community-based partners to be effective.
- Both use "real world" experiences to provide a context for and to demonstrate the relevance of student classroom learning.
- Both have made use of interdisciplinary curricula.
- Both use the skills and knowledge students have acquired as their measure of success.
- Both require considerable professional development for educators and community partners.

...Both service-learning and school-to-work use "real world" experiences to provide a context for and to demonstrate the relevance of student classroom learning...

Differences Between Service-Learning and School-to-Work

- Service-learning does not focus on a multi-year progression of skills development in a particular industry; school-to-work generally does.
- Service-learning and school-to-work have different sets of advocates at the national, state and local levels.
- Service-learning opportunities are generally located in organizations designed to improve communities; school-to-work opportunities are often with a for-profit organization (but are also located in not-for-profit organizations).
- Service-learning is generally unpaid; school-to-work encourages paid opportunities for students.
- Service-learning's goals focus on academic development, cultivation of knowledge and development of civic responsibility; school-to-work's goals focus on academic development, career and job readiness and development of work ethic.

Benefits of Service-Learning and School-to-Work

- Both provide opportunities for students to develop and apply attitudes, values, behaviors, skills and competencies (including those identified by SCANS*) that are important for success in the workplace, school, post-secondary education and training, the community and in life.
- Both can be catalysts for far-reaching, comprehensive systemic education reform.
- Both connect schools and students to their communities by providing opportunities to assume meaningful roles and to be seen as resources – one through community service and one through work-force preparation – which can result in improved self-esteem, better citizenship and active participation in the community.
- Both require and foster collaboration and partnerships among a broad base of community stakeholders to develop and implement an effective initiative.
- Both provide public forums in which to demonstrate the value of these strategies. As the community sees and benefits from the knowledge and skills young people develop, they are more likely to support service-learning and school-to-work.
- Both can motivate and encourage learning by actively engaging students in a meaningful learning process.
- Both provide opportunities for students to work and learn to cooperate with individuals from diverse populations and different backgrounds, including adults of all ages.
- Both provide opportunities for authentic instruction and assessment and new settings for learning.
- Both allow opportunities for students to establish a network of contacts for future community involvement and career opportunities.

* See footnote on page 10

Benefits of Linking Service-Learning and School-to-Work

The resulting initiative and student experiences:

- Can provide the foundation for comprehensive school reform efforts.
- Increase the level of non-school based resources available including funding, community resources and public support.
- Broaden work-based learning opportunities from the private sector (traditionally the site of work-based school-to-work experiences) to the public and independent sectors. This broadens the perspective of the student as to future career possibilities and increases the overall number of available work-based experiences.
- Demonstrate to students the interconnectedness between the economy and society, how productive work is a part of being a concerned citizen and the importance of service to the community as a goal of employment.
- Can integrate school-based and work-based experiences where elementary and middle school students participate primarily in service-learning and high-school students participate in both service-learning and school-to-work activities. (Please note, though, that both service-learning and school-to-work opportunities are valuable and offered at the elementary and secondary levels.)
- Facilitate, in even the youngest of students, some of the knowledge, skills, abilities and positive attitudes employers look for in employees – lifelong learning and community participation.
- Help young students become aware of and make tentative career choices around which educational goals can be set.

What are the implications of these observations? The following summarizes how they relate to policy, partnership and practice:

Policy

- Combining service-learning and school-to-work can facilitate and support comprehensive school reform initiatives and policies.
- Service-learning and school-to-work are vehicles for supporting policies that see all students as life-long learners who benefit from experiencing connections among curricular areas and between academics and real-world experiences.
- Combining service-learning and school-to-work increases the availability of resources for both and for student learning.

Partnerships

- Partnerships with the community are necessary for service-learning and school-to-work as individual initiatives but critical when they are linked.
- Combining service-learning and school-to-work allows for the involvement of a wide variety of partners. Just a few of these include businesses, community-based organizations, government agencies and civic organizations.
- Stakeholders must be involved right from the onset of partnership planning. Partnerships with the community help create and maintain public awareness about the value of service-learning and school-to-work to both the student and the community. This will help ensure sustainability.

Practice

- Efforts that combine service-learning and school-to-work provide a broad range of opportunities for students to explore careers in the public, private and independent sectors.
- Students have the opportunity to reinforce academic and other skills that are important to active participation in a democratic society.
- Students view themselves as resources to the community while reinforcing knowledge, skills and abilities; the community views themselves as playing a critical role in local education issues while reaping the benefits of the services students provide.

Policies that Facilitate the Linkage of Service-Learning and School-to-Work

Many localities have crafted state or local policies that support the coordination of service-learning and school-to-work. According to a recent service-learning policy scan by the Education Commission of the States, seven states include language in their constitution, statutes, codes or regulations or Board of Education regulations that encourage the coordination of service-learning and school-to-work.

- In Connecticut, a statement letter from the state superintendent of schools affirms that, "we are encouraging service-learning, cooperative work experience in schools and school-to-career programs."
- In Florida, a 1997 state statute relating to student readiness for post-secondary education and the workplace indicates, "All students shall be encouraged to take part in service-learning opportunities."
- In Iowa, a 1999 Board of Education regulation indicates, "If the general assembly appropriates money for a career pathways program," the provisions of the program are outlined. The program would include service-learning opportunities for students.
- In Minnesota, several state codes and regulations mention service-learning and school to work. Minnesota has combined their service-learning and school-to-work efforts under one division with service-learning as one of the indicators of an effective school-to-work initiative.
- In New Jersey, one of the strategies in the Strategic Plan for Systemic Improvement of Education states that, "community service and service-learning opportunities for all students [should be seen] as a means of enriching their academic learning, applying learning to real life and work situations and developing skills for productive citizenship."
- In South Carolina, the 2000 state School-to-Work Transition Regulations indicate that service-learning experiences are encouraged in the School-to-Work Program.
- In Tennessee, a 2000 Board Regulation states, "local boards of education are authorized to implement programs for school-based enterprises, studios, laboratories and service-learning to provide work-based learning experiences. These experiences must be integrated with classroom instruction."

We found that necessity is often the mother of invention, that is, programs sometimes exist where explicit policies do not. In those cases, the language is loose, vague or non-existent. In the next section, we discuss the findings from our phone and written interviews with state and local level individuals who are linking service-learning and school-to-work. Some of them enjoy the backing of policies and funding to support their work. Others are forging ahead without this "formal" support to make positive change communities, schools and students.

> ...many localiities have crafted state or local policies that support the coordination of service-learning and school-to-work...

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* In 1991, the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) issued reports outlining the skills and attitudes that students need for success in the workplace. They include:

Foundations:

- Basic Skills: reading, writing, performing arithmetic and mathematical concepts, listening and speaking;
- Thinking Skills: thinking creatively, making decisions, reasoning, problem solving, visualizing, knowing how to learn; and
- Personal Qualities: responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity, honesty.

Competencies:

- Resources: identifies, organizes, plans and allocates resources;
- Interpersonal: works with others;
- Information: acquires and uses information;
- Systems: understands complex interrelationships; and
- Technology: works with a variety of technologies.

Successful Strategies:

Rationale for Policies, Partnerships and Practice that Link Service-Learning and School-to-Work

We contacted individuals at the state, district and school-building level to discuss the complementary nature of service-learning and school-to-work and the state and local policies and partnerships that support their activities. We found three broad rationales for linking service-learning and school-to-work:

- Both learning opportunities expose students to a wide variety of careers and illustrate how school-based learning relates to the skills and abilities required in the world of work.
- Both provide opportunities for students to engage in multi-disciplinary, project-based learning.
- Since both facilitate the development of similar skills, their resources can be leveraged and combined to support a comprehensive initiative.

Many people interviewed indicated that more than one of these rationales often motivated the coordination of service-learning and school-to-work in their site. Regardless of the rationale for combining service-learning and school-to-work, each person interviewed maintained that creating solid school-community partnerships provides a critical foundation. What follows is a discussion of these rationales and examples of how they are manifested at the state and local levels.

Regardless of the rationale for combining service-learning and school-to-work, each person interviewed maintained that creating solid school-community partnerships provides a critical foundation.

Connection of School-Based and Work-Based Learning

Linking service-learning and school-to-work gives students opportunities to see not-for-profit work or work in community-based organizations as a viable career option. It also allows them to see how a wide variety of knowledge, skills and abilities apply and are needed to successfully function in the workplace. Developing a comprehensive program that coordinates service-learning and school-to-work gives students opportunities to see how these apply to situations outside school and to develop the variety of skills necessary to ensure their success in the workforce and in community life.

Minnesota: The State Department of Children, Families and Learning

Rationale:

The Department of Children, Families and Learning has combined their efforts in service-learning and school-to-work under the school-to-work division. Minnesota's school-to-work initiative aims to create a system that provides learners with options for receiving quality education and preparation for careers. It requires varied and flexible school-based, work-based and service-learning opportunities be created that meet a broad range of learner interests, abilities, and needs. The service-based learning provides the environment in which learners can gain organizational, team and problem-solving skills and other attitudes and capabilities necessary to future learning and work. These experiences provide immediate relevance to classroom study as well as opportunities for learners to demonstrate how to solve real life problems.

Policies:

Service-learning is one of eight indicators that must be incorporated into every school-to-work program in order to access state school-to-work funding. The indicator states: "Learners have opportunities to participate in learning experiences in the work place or as a service to the community. Each learning experience is designed to enhance their classroom learning." Service-learning exists as a separately funded initiative in some communities, but all school-to-work initiatives must incorporate service-learning.

Partnerships:

At the local level, school-to-work is a community-wide initiative that requires broad-based input and participation in developing plans and implementing the system. Forty-four multi-sector partnerships have been formed in the state to accomplish the school-to-work mission. System creation requires a high level of coordination among local parents, educators, employers, community-based organizations, government agencies and learners to decide how the initiative will be implemented locally. Partnerships cultivate community resources that provide student opportunities such as internships, community service, and career exploration programs.

Practice:

The coordination of service-learning and school-to-work takes many forms across the state. Some examples include:

- middle school students shadow legislative aides at the State Capitol;
- a third grade class works with the local nursery to design and plant the community's flower beds;
- high school juniors, with the help of a local business, manage their school's concession stands to raise funds for a new computer lab; and
- student interns serve in local organizations.

Contact:

More examples can be found on the Minnesota Department of Children and Families website at http://cfl.state.mn.us.

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Linking service-learning and school-to-work gives students opportunities to see...how a wide variety of knowledge, skills and abilities apply and are needed to successfully function in the workplace

Arizona: Grand Canyon School District

Rationale:

The state's school-to-work programs are designed to teach and reinforce the skills put forth by SCANS as skills needed to succeed in the 21st century. Service-learning is seen as a tool for teaching these skills. It provides an opportunity to connect students to their community and use the classroom as a living lab. The students learn to be creative, think critically, work in teams, apply knowledge to community solutions, communicate and negotiate effectively. They feel like and are perceived as valuable community resources, take responsibility for their own learning and connect field work to the classroom curriculum.

Policies:

Arizona's school-to-work programs are generally developed within the "5-Star Criteria" framework: school-based component, work-based component, connecting activity component, evidence of success and evidence of sustainability.

Partnerships:

The National Park Service allows employees to work with the students several times a week and donate all the plants for the project.

Practice:

The students in the Grand Canyon School District partnered with the National Park Service to work on a habitat restoration project on the south rim of the Grand Canyon. They learned to monitor the survival and mortality rates of the plants and discovered that many plants were dying due to pedestrian traffic in areas designated as vegetation sites. The students developed controlled access areas for pedestrians in an effort to boost the life expectancy of plants. Students germinated plants and trained and organized other local schools around the planting process and the necessary mix of plants and seeds to maintain an ecosystem native to the region. Students turned an eyesore into a balanced ecosystem. The project incorporates elements of the science, technology, math and art curricula and makes links with the state science standards and service-learning through an inquiry-based science program that adapts and designs curricula to address problems in the local community. Through cooperative learning and team work, students learned and devel-

oped many hands-on skills valuable in the workplace. Moreover, the students were exposed to less common career opportunities such as biological restoration and field sciences.

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The state's school-to-work programs are designed to teach and reinforce the skills put forth by SCANS as skills needed to succeed in the 21st century. Service-learning is seen as a tool for teaching these skills.

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Multi-Disciplinary, Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning almost always requires that students draw upon their learning in more than one academic content area as well as practice such SCANS skills as working with others, gathering and synthesizing information and problem solving. It asks students to identify a local problem to be addressed or to draw on their own interests to clarify, research, analyze, synthesize and evaluate information to come to a conclusion or develop a solution. Both service-learning and school-to-work present opportunities for students to do all the above.

Pennsylvania: School District of Philadelphia

Rationale:

In Philadelphia, project-based learning is the common underpinning of service-learning and school-to-work. The School District of Philadelphia includes school-to-work and service-learning as two of six cross-cutting competencies — understandings and skills, common within and across the academic disciplines, that enable students to construct knowledge and apply it in real-world contexts. These competencies are seen as necessary for both college and career and to equip high school graduates to become productive citizens and employees in a culturally diverse society.

Policies:

By June 2002, each student will need to complete a citizenship project to graduate from grades 4, 8 and high school. These are multi-disciplinary projects that address a community need. The majority of these projects are service-learning focused for the younger students and work-based focused in the upper grades.

Partnerships:

Partners vary based on the project but include private, government, civic and other community-based organizations.

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Practice:

Some of the projects that have been planned and completed by the students include the following:

- As interns for the Fairmount Park Commission, three Philadelphia high school juniors helped restore damaged lands that threatened to taint the community's water supply. While doing the hands-on work, the three

students also helped to teach elementary school children who were working on site. This included helping the younger children connect their experiences at the park with their studies in school.

- The high school students decided to build a model to simulate what the park area would look like after full restoration. With the help of the elementary school students, they created a mini-park with running water. For their research paper, the students wrote about the history of the park—how it became a park, how its purpose has evolved, and how funding and personnel shortages have led to its present state of neglect. The students also wrote reflection papers about their experiences and gave oral presentations to their classes. One of the students who was considering a career as an elementary school teacher, was now more certain of his teaching interest.

- The third grade class in a small elementary school participated in a writing skills and career awareness project called "Journey Bears." In small groups, the students developed five job-related questions for a local business or community agency. In addition, they asked the employees to evaluate their writing skills, i.e., had they written clear, concise, and thought-provoking questions. Each group wrote its questions in a notebook and attached it to a teddy bear, known as a "Journey Bear." The Journey Bears "traveled" to the business or community agency where employees from various departments answered the questions. Many of the children later followed the bears to the respective businesses to tour the companies and talk with the employees.

  When the bears returned to the school with their answers, the students analyzed and interpreted the data. They prepared a written and oral report of their findings and developed tri-fold brochures, presentation boards and technology-based advertisements for the companies. The final products were presented at an exhibition for students, parents, employees and other community members. Throughout the project, students kept a journal; at the end, they wrote an evaluation of their work and learning.

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Florida: Taylor County High School

Rationale:

The cross-curricular Environmental Academy is entirely content- and project-driven. Academy leaders use service-learning and school-to-work as the convenient and natural vehicles for completing the projects. The projects prove to the students that they can make a difference in their community and help develop marketable skills including team work and collaboration.

Policies:

The Academy started as a school-to-work initiative with local businesses in an effort to increase their ability to hire qualified workers. The service-learning focus was added later because of the nature of the work being done. There are no local policies that specifically address the linkage of service-learning and school-to-work. The Environmental Academy was originally aimed towards "at-risk" students but now anyone in the district can apply. The business partnerships have been developed with the assistance and advice of the State Department of Education's school-business partnership experts.

Partnerships:

The Environmental Protection Agency, local businesses, county government, Taylor County Chamber of Commerce and community-based organizations are all partners. The program was funded from 1989 to 1993 through grants from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement, the Corporation for National Service and local businesses. Students have the option of getting internships with local business and public sector organizations to work on similar environmental projects during the summer.

Practice:

The Environmental Studies Academy includes 95-100 high school students from grades 9-12 each year. The Academy includes four teachers: two science, one math and one English. The students have been conducting longitudinal studies and monitoring the Econfina River for Taylor County for the Suwanee River Water Management District. More recently, these students have monitored the impact of clean-up efforts on the Fenholloway River for the Environmental Protection Agency, the site dumping of residue and chemicals since the 1940s. They also do well water testing on behalf of the local health department for the residents who live on this river. Inside the classroom the students

are expected to work together and develop new ideas for community improvement projects. Outside the classroom, students do much of the water monitoring, including the levels of nitrate, alkalinity and phosphate and are responsible for keeping an up-to-date laboratory book and writing reflection papers. The data gathered by the students are used in the classroom discussions and lessons.

The work of the Environmental Academy's students has changed the quality of local river waters drastically. What was once a river contaminated by a pulp mill's residue and chemicals now has water pure enough to drink. The students' efforts positively affected the entire community. All students involved in the Environmental Academy feel a great sense of pride in their work and, in many cases, this stimulates their desire to learn. Since the program has been initiated, the college-bound senior percentage has increased to over 30% in 2000. The students enrolled in the program have acquired some "real life" skills that can help their future employability.

Contact:

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The cross-curricular Environmental Academy is entirely content- and project-driven. Academy leaders use service-learning and school-to-work as the convenient and natural vehicles for completing the projects.

Leveraging and Combining Resources

In many states and localities, service-learning and school-to-work have separate divisions, budget line items and identities. In others, educators and other partners have been able to collaborate and encourage pooling resources. They capitalize on skills development and academic learning that service-learning and school-to-work can facilitate and are able to create stronger, more comprehensive and sustainable programs. They do this by cultivating a diverse mix of resources and advocates who speak for the strength of connecting the two initiatives.

California: California Department of Education

Rationale:

In 1999, the California State Department of Education released the Report of the State Superintendent's Service-Learning Task Force, *Service-Learning: Linking Classrooms and Communities* which provides recommendations for implementing service-learning in schools and districts. The report states that young people learn best when they connect their learning to something meaningful. Service-learning and school-to-work are opportunities for young people to apply their knowledge through practice. They also state that including community partners in the planning of service-learning activities is critical for sustainability. The same is true for school-to-work initiatives.

Policies:

Service-learning is connected to state and national initiatives including state content standards, school-to-work, the Improving America's Schools Act, Healthy Start, after-school programs and Safe Schools and Violence Prevention programs.

Partnerships:

The partners vary according to the specific project but include local community-based organizations, businesses, educators, organized labor, families and government agencies.

Practice:

One of the outstanding district-wide initiatives that coordinates service-learning and school-to-work is described below.

Eureka is located in a rural isolated area of northern California. Its depressed economy qualifies Eureka as a California Enterprise Zone and makes it eligible for Title I funding. The Eureka City Schools Board of Education and Superintendent, however, are creative and innovative in their approach to supporting the development of all students. They have endorsed and assisted in the sustainability of coordinated service-learning and school-to-work programs. Service-learning and school-to-work are now incorporated into every grade level for all students.

Eureka City Schools received a six-year CalServe grant in 1993, which reinforced and supported the multitude of service-learning activities that were already established throughout the schools. Service-learning has long been viewed as a tool for learning and the success of the CalServe work resulted in creating a Special Projects Division, the goal of which is to provide opportunities for students to be connected to their communities, stay in school and be successful. When school-to-work was being established in Eureka, it was a natural fit to integrate efforts with the service-learning efforts of the Special Projects division and create links among students, the community, business people and career development. Each school-to-work school site coordinator receives in-service training on the connection of service-learning and school-to-work. The two strategies share staff resources, space, budget and goals. Cross-curricular projects are created with the goal of helping students be successful in their careers and developing a sense of civic responsibility.

In 2000, a grant was received from the U.S. Department of Education to create HealthPath, a project which connects the health community to students to work together in service-learning activities and career development. The Eureka City Schools Board of Education has included service-learning and school-to-work in their five-year strategic plan. Because of this support, Special Projects has the latitude to pursue opportunities to link students to their community using a holistic, comprehensive approach that includes service-learning and school-to-work.

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South Carolina: Britton's Neck High School

Rationale:

At the state level, service-learning and school-to-work are considered to be a "natural fit" and are integrated into the curriculum to help students make the connection between the real world and the world of classrooms and textbooks. In Britton's Neck, young people serve their communities to enrich their academic learning, develop citizenship skills and prepare them to be productive contributors to the workforce.

Policies:

South Carolina has integrated service-learning into three major pieces of state education legislation; the School-to-Work Act of 1994, the Early Childhood Development and Academic Assistance Act of 1994 and the Education Accountability Act of 1998. The Office of the State Superintendent and Public Information references service-learning as an indicator of a quality education system under the law. Service-learning serves as a vehicle for other state department of education initiatives including Safe and Drug Free Schools and Healthy Schools.

Partnership:

Britton's Neck School District has received funding from sub-grants through South Carolina's Learn and Serve America initiative since the early 1990s. The partnerships involve local government, business, non-profits, institutions of higher education, and religious groups. Britton's Neck has also received support through the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Learning In Deed initiative.

Practice:

There are 565 students in the Britton's Neck School District. Although the district receives service-learning funding, the projects in which the students engage are mostly of the hands-on, school-to-work type. The students conduct needs assessments to determine which projects would be most beneficial the community. The students then plan the project, learn the skills needed to carry it out and evaluate its effectiveness. Block scheduling makes it easier for students to work on their projects. In 1999, for example, the students determined that the town needed a fire department. The teachers integrated a safety curriculum into the core academic course work; the students secured a plot of land from a member of the community and built the station. When they were finished, the property around the fire station was reclassified and the

homeowners insurance of the surrounding houses was decreased. Local leaders in the school district believe the most valuable projects the students could offer are often tangible ones. When students physically build a structure such as a fire station, they are learning and practicing skills that are best reinforced on the work site rather than in a classroom.

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At the state level, service-learning and school-to-work are considered to be a "natural fit" and are integrated into the curriculum to help students make the connection between the real world and the world of classrooms and textbooks.

Conclusions

Service-learning and school-to-work each offers tremendous opportunities for students to learn and practice critical skills that will help make them caring citizens, workers and members of a democratic society. Both require significant and often difficult changes in the way schools operate including scheduling modifications and making transportation available. They also require major shifts in how schools relate to the community including changing the attitudes of educators, community members, business people, families and students about how service-learning and school-to-work can help students achieve.

When combined, these two strategies provide even more opportunities for student learning and community involvement. The implications of our research and interviews are:

- States, school districts and schools need to establish and enforce **policies** that support experiential, multi-disciplinary learning that takes place both in the school building and at other locations in the community.

- Linking service-learning and school-to-work both requires and facilitates strong community **partnerships**. These partnerships can build strong relationships and often set the stage for comprehensive education reform.

- Although activities vary from community to community, **practice** focuses on encouraging students to learn and reinforce a multitude of skills in an integrated fashion that allows them to see the relationship between what they learn in school and how it is applied.

These implications build on and reinforce the conclusion drawn from PARTNERS IN EDUCATION's conversations with individuals from the national level. The participants in the 1996 Wingspread Summit emphasized the opportunities partnership can offer to support efforts that combine service-learning and school-to-work. The findings here stress the value of working with partners from the public, private and independent sectors to offer a broad range of real-life, hands on experiences that deepen their understanding of academic and practical concepts. These implications also build on and reinforce the conclusions drawn from the PARTNERS IN EDUCATION summit in Kansas City which stated that service-learning and school-to-work are not programs but rather processes that must involve partnerships with a multitude of community-based stakeholders. . . .

Clearly our current research indicates that in order to build a system that connects service-learning and school-to-work, relationships must be changed between the school and the community. Partnerships can provide a structured process through which many sectors of a community are heard and new relationships forged. It is not a coincidence that the rationales described in this document – connecting school- and work-based learning, providing a venue for multi-disciplinary project-based learning, and leveraging resources – are also elements of broader education reform efforts. The partnerships required to effectively link service-learning and school-to-work often pave the way for further education reform.

Providing both service-learning and school-to-work opportunities for all students can be a result of a structured partnership development process and be a step towards developing a comprehensive system that meets changing student and community needs in the 21st century.

...in order to build a system that connects service-learning and school-to-work, relationships must be changed between the school and the community...The partnerships required to effectively link service-learning and school-to-work often pave the way for further education reform...

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PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

Mission and Goals

The mission of the National Association of PARTNERS IN EDUCATION is to provide leadership in the formation and growth of effective partnerships that ensure success for all students. For over thirty years, PARTNERS IN EDUCATION has helped develop school volunteer, intergenerational, community service, and business partnership programs throughout the United States. We strive to increase the number, quality, and scope of effective partnerships; raise awareness about the importance of partnerships to achieve student success; and promote to policymakers the importance of effective partnerships.

What We Mean By "Partnerships"

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION defines partnerships as a mutually supportive arrangement between schools or school districts and individual volunteers, businesses, government agencies, or community organization that often include written contracts in which partners commit themselves to specific objectives and activities to benefit students.

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION has a unique network of international, national, state and local community leaders, exceptional training materials, and outstanding consulting and training capabilities. Through the development of partnership programs, PARTNERS IN EDUCATION has helped community stakeholders improve the delivery of education services and increase academic achievement for all children.

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